and Bodhgaya, Nalanda, Rajgir and Vaishali in Bihar. The project was completed at a cost of Rs. 251.05 crores in December, 1998.

Loan assistance was availed from the Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund of Japan (now known as Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) for the Ajanta-Ellora Conservation and Tourism Development Project (Phase-I) in Maharashtra State. The Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund loan assistance was to the tune of 3745 million Japanese Yen. The project was completed at a cost of Rs. 127.50 crores in March, 2002. The places covered were Ajanta and Ellora in Maharashtra.

Japan Bank for International Cooperation has agreed in principle to provide loan assistance (Japanese Yen 7331 million) for Ajanta-Ellora Conservation and Tourism Development Project Phase-I I. The locations to be covered are Ajanta, Ellora, Pithalkhora, Aurangabad, Daulatabad, Patnadevi, Lonar, Nasik, Pune, Elephanta caves, Bhaja and Bedsa, Shivneri, Malshej, and Kolvan in Maharashtra.

Scrapping of service tax on travel agents

767. SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA:

SHRI MOTILAL VORA:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received representations from hoteliers and travel agents for scrapping of 8 per cent service tax on travel agents; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and what action Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Ministry of Finance have not agreed to the request as reflected in the budget proposals announced on 8th July, 2004.